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PREVENTION OF AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE

Letter dated 12 May 1998 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the texts of the statements by the Assistant Head of the Office of the President of the Russian Federation and Press-Secretary of the President of the Russian Federation, S. V. Yastrzhemsky, of 5 May 1998 (annex I) on questions relating to the export control of military and dual-use technologies and also by the Director of the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation, N. D. Kovalev, of 6 May 1998 (annex II) and the Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation, I. D. Sergeev, of 7 May 1998 (annex III) on the problems of monitoring the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 71 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) S. LAVROV

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ANNEX I

Statement by the Assistant Head of the Office of the President of the Russian Federation and Press-Secretary of the President of the Russian Federation, S. V. Yastrzhemsky, of 5 May 1998

The President of the Russian Federation has instructed the Government to develop a series of measures to enhance the system for the export control of military and dual-use technologies.

The questions relating to the export control of military and dual-use technologies are under intense scrutiny by the President and the Government of the Russian Federation. Complete Government control is being exercised in this field.

Reliable export control of military technologies and dual-use technologies is one of the highest priorities of State policy in ensuring the national security of the Russian Federation.

Military and dual-use technologies are the national property of the Russian Federation, which has been created by several generations of our people. Export control, therefore, must totally exclude the possibility of squandering unique national technologies, materials, component parts and intellectual property and prevent leaks of information that constitutes a State and military secret.

We absolutely consider that this is a question of not only national but also international security. The President has stressed that our State will continue to support and carry out all international treaties and agreements in this field, particularly in the area of monitoring the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means for their delivery.

This monitoring can and must become a powerful mechanism for enhancing the effectiveness of the Russian Federation's entire system of military and technical cooperation and an instrument for supporting and protecting the enterprises of the defence industrial complex.

ANNEX II

Statement by the Director of the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation, N. D. Kovalev of 6 May 1998

In the interests of ensuring the national security of the Russian Federation and complying with the international obligations of the State, the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation is carrying out continuous and resolute work in the field of monitoring the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means for their delivery. These activities are designed to prevent the illegal export of raw materials, materials, equipment, technologies, scientific and technical information and services that can be used in the creation of weapons of mass destruction and the means for their delivery.

Those who violate the international control regime in this area must know that punishment is inevitable and that the measures provided for as part of international legal practice and under Russian legislation will be applied to them with complete severity.

Articles 188 and 189 of the Russian Criminal Code on the illegal export of technologies, scientific and technical information and services that can be used in the creation of weapons of mass destruction and the means for their delivery provide for very severe punishment - imprisonment for a period of three to seven years. In cases where such violations are committed repeatedly or by a functionary using his official position, the punishment is even harsher - imprisonment for 5 to 10 years.

No one should have any doubt that our Service's practical experience and traditions will ensure reliable protection of the national interests of the Russian Federation and effective monitoring of compliance with the obligations assumed in the area of verifying the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means for their delivery.

ANNEX III

Statement by the Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation, I. D. Sergeev, of 7 May 1998

Our country's position with regard to questions relating to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means for their delivery is based on principle and is clearly designed to ensure unconditional compliance with the international obligations that it has assumed in this field. Moreover, the Russian Federation, no less than other countries, understands all the danger inherent in the consequences of violating the non-proliferation regime, particularly with regard to States situated in the immediate vicinity of Russian borders. The national security concept of the Russian Federation approved by decree No. 1300 of the President of the Russian Federation of 17 December 1997 clearly and precisely states that "the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other types of weapons of mass destruction, the technologies for their production and the means of delivery, first and foremost in the countries bordering on the Russian Federation and in the regions adjacent to it, constitutes a serious threat". The Russian Federation conducts a policy of preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means for their delivery without regard for the State specifically involved; this policy is based on the security interests of the Russian Federation since the diversion of military technologies, weapons of mass destruction and the means for their delivery may ultimately be turned against our defence capability.

As for cooperation in other fields, fully comprehending the responsibility undertaken to carry out the international treaties and agreements signed by the Russian Federation on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means for their delivery as well as that within the framework of international export control regimes, we see no obstacles to the development of traditional military and technical cooperation with foreign countries, inter alia, in the field of conventional weapons, and we intend to continue such cooperation in accordance with existing agreements.